

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	A-00	CA-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	PDI-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	FDRE-01
	OBO-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	MOFM-00
	MOF-00	CDC-00	VCIE-00	DCP-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	OIC-00
	OMB-00	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	PA-00	MCC-00	GIWI-00	SGAC-00
	SP-00	IRM-00	EVR-00	FMP-00	CBP-00	EPAE-00	SCRS-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	CARC-00	SAS-00	DTT-00	FA-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6414
INFO AMEMBASSY ASMARA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USEU BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
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SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA FY 2010 DISASTER REDECLARATION

SUMMARY

¶1. In July 2009, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (GFDRE) increased the projected number of people requiring emergency food assistance between June and December 2009 to 6.2 million people, from previous January to June 2009 estimates of 4.2 million people. In addition, an estimated 7.5 million chronically food-insecure beneficiaries currently receive assistance from the GFDRE-managed Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP).

¶2. Populations in many areas of the country confront significant humanitarian challenges, including conflict, malnutrition, delayed food deliveries, potential flooding and disease outbreaks, such as acute watery diarrhea (AWD). In addition, the USAID-supported Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) anticipates that the delayed onset and poor performance of the June to September meher rains, combined with the widespread failure of the previous four rains, will result in a below-normal October to January meher harvest in crop-producing areas of Ethiopia, contributing to a

further deterioration in food insecurity and increased malnutrition. Charge d'Affaires (CDA) therefore re-declares a disaster in response to the complex emergency in Ethiopia and requests the continued provision of disaster assistance in fiscal year (FY) 2010. End summary.

BACKGROUND

¶3. Consecutive seasons of failed rains, combined with a rapidly growing population, increased inflation, endemic poverty, and limited government capacity, have led to chronic food insecurity and water shortages in large areas of Ethiopia, including Somali Region and parts of Oromiya, Afar, Tigray, Amhara, and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) regions. Land degradation, small and decreasing farmer landholdings, lack of access to off-farm labor, poor access to health services, potable water, and markets also continue to undermine food security and vulnerable populations' ability to resist cyclical shocks. Low immunization coverage and limited access to health services coupled with poor nutrition pose risks for contagious disease epidemics, including malaria, measles, cholera, meningitis, and HIV/AIDS. In addition, flooding, drought, volcanic activity, and locust and army worm infestations represent cyclical events and ongoing risks to populations in Ethiopia.

CURRENT SITUATION

¶4. According to GFDRE estimates, 6.2 million individuals currently require emergency food assistance countrywide, in addition to 7.5 million people chronically food-insecure PSNP beneficiaries. The collective impact of drought conditions, poor rain performance, widespread AWD outbreaks, significant population displacement, and increasing malnutrition rates continue to contribute to deteriorating humanitarian conditions.

--- Food Security and Agriculture ---

¶5. Poor performance of the 2009 February to May belg rains has resulted in water shortages, decreased pasture availability, and significantly reduced belg crop performance in southern and northeastern Ethiopia. In addition, FEWS NET has reported the delayed onset and early cessation of the June to October meher rains in some areas, increasing the likelihood of a significantly reduced meher harvest, the source of more than 90 percent of Ethiopia's annual crop production.

¶6. Similar rainfall patterns in 2002 led to a 21 percent reduction in total harvest yields from the previous five-year average and increased rates of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). The poor performance of the 2009 summer (kiremt) rains exceeds 2002 conditions, affecting drought-prone areas as well as areas that normally receive sufficient rain, including crop surplus-producing parts of Ethiopia. Areas affected include Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, SNNP, Afar Regions, and Somali regions.

¶7. The anticipated below-normal main October to January meher harvest is expected to result in the early onset of the traditional June to September hunger season and an increase in staple food prices in early 2010, exacerbating existing inflationary pressures on poor households and contributing to increased food insecurity.

¶8. Due to the effects of intensifying food insecurity and drought conditions in neighboring countries, the U.N. Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports increased pastoralists and livestock movement from Kenya and Somalia to Ethiopia seeking access to water and grazing land and straining limited resources in pastoral areas of Ethiopia. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that more than 200,000 livestock have moved across the border into Oromiya Region since June 2009. The influx of livestock increases the risk of livestock disease and conflict over scarce resources, according to FEWS NET.

--- Health and Nutrition ---

¶9. Since early April, OCHA has reported an increase in the number of severely malnourished children admitted into therapeutic feeding programs (TFPs), with a total of 71,000 cases reported from January to July 2009. However, TFP admission reporting rates remain low throughout Ethiopia, averaging 34 percent and hindering an accurate assessment of malnutrition conditions. OCHA notes that malnutrition conditions remain of significant concern, despite improvements from 2008 due to pre-positioning of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) and more proactive identification and treatment of severely malnourished children by government health extension workers with support from the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and NGOs. UNICEF estimates that 242,000 children under-five years of age will require treatment for SAM through the end of 2009 with increased caseloads expected in 2010 associated with projected reductions in the main meher crop harvest.

¶10. In early September, the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF reported more than 18,000 cholera and AWD cases in seven out of ten regions countrywide. The GFDRE Ministry of Health anticipates up to an additional 114,000 cases before the end of the year due to the effects of the rainy season and increased vulnerability to infection among food-insecure populations.

--- Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) ---

¶11. Although widespread, resource-related internal and cross-border conflict remains under-reported due to GFDRE sensitivities. In February 2009 alone, ethnic conflict in Somali and Oromiya regions displaced more than 100,000 people and resulted in 300 deaths. Following recent clashes along the Sudanese border, NGOs and U.N. agencies reported the displacement of an estimated 30,000 individuals within Gambella Region. The anticipated reduction in the main meher harvest production coupled with consecutive seasons of failed rains is predicted to increase conflict for scarce resources, leading to increased ethnic violence and displacement.

--- Somali Region Challenges ---

¶12. Somali Region is one of the most drought-affected areas in Ethiopia but ongoing counter-insurgency operations have limited humanitarian access and response efforts. Although improved from past years, access remains sporadic, ad-hoc, and often dependent on local military commander decisions, despite efforts by the Somali Regional Government to formalize access procedures.

¶13. Insurgent activity and security operations have disrupted trade networks. Restrictions on the movement of people and livestock, combined with the

failure of past rains, have also exacerbated food insecurity and malnutrition. Severe water shortages exist in all seven, highly belg rain-dependent districts, according to the Somali Regional State Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (DPPB). Consecutive seasons of failed rains associated with significant livestock losses in 2008 have reduced coping mechanisms and increased population vulnerabilities.

---Potential Flooding ---

¶14. El Nino conditions are expected to result in normal to above-normal rainfall during the upcoming October to December rainfall season, according to the USAID-supported Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET). FEWS NET cautions that heavy rains are likely to result in increased livestock mortality among weakened animals in drought-affected areas, flooding, infrastructure damage, reduced humanitarian and commercial access, and increased incidents in human and livestock water-related diseases, such as malaria, diarrheal disease, and Rift Valley Fever (RVF).

Disaster Re-Declaration

¶15. As a result of current and projected humanitarian needs resulting from the cumulative impact of consecutive seasons of failed or poor rainfall, localized conflict, disease outbreaks, potential flooding, and high food prices on increased food insecurity and malnutrition among vulnerable populations, CDA re-declares a complex emergency disaster for Ethiopia in FY 2010. It is beyond the ability of the GFDRE to fully address increased humanitarian needs. It is in the interest of the USG to provide humanitarian assistance and the GFDRE will accept continued USG support. Therefore, CDA requests USG humanitarian resources to address urgent humanitarian needs and reduce the risk of vulnerable populations in Ethiopia.

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